each of the labs/institutes have been finalised. The analysis of the proceedings to arrive at the final conclusions is in process so that the overall strategy for CSIR could be worked out.

Modernisation of NMDC

†*187. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) is depended upon foreign technology and equipments for its survival;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, Jhe steps Government are contemplating to take for its modernisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRIJ KISHORETRIPATHY): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) NMDC is a premier organisation with its own R&D laboratory and has developed a high level of expertise of world standard in areas like open cast mining, mineral exploration and engineering services. It supplements its expertise with imported technology and equipment only when required.

Area under foodgrain cultivation

*188. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the total area under cultivation in the country is coming down, resulting in a sharp decline in agricultural production; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken to solve this problem, by encouraging the farmers to bring more area for cultivation under foodgrain, by providing them incentives under various programmes?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The net area shown under agriculture has remained almost constant at around 142 million hectares during the last few years. The Agricultural production in the country shows a long-term upward trend, albeit with fluctuations.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.